

**Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 13, 2009**

**Members:** Darian Unger, Alan Bowser, Kathy Stevens, Lucinda Lessley, Megan Moriarty, Deborah Linn, Evan Glass, Phil Olivetti, Mark Woodard, Casey Anderson, Constance Wynn and Marilyn Seitz

**Members Absent:** Mitch Warren, Tiffany Graham-Golden and Mary Pat Spon

**Guests:** Jennifer Nettles, Bob Colvin, Lynn Hughes, Ben Stutz, Vinome Azar, Jon Elkind, Edith Holleman, Jane Gorbaty, Mara Parker, Richard Jaeggi, Jason Tomassini, Mel Tull, Lt. Paul Liquorie

**Call to Order and Introduction:** Darian Unger Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. members and attendees introduced themselves

**Approval of Minutes:** The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board approved the March 2009 minutes

**Community Comments:**

- Bob Colvin mentioned the next East Silver Spring Citizens meeting is Monday, April 20, 2009. Someone from Park & Planning will discuss the development on Lot 3 and possibly someone will attend to give a Transit Center update.

**Chairs Report:**

Darian Unger reported:

- Welcome our two newest members Casey Anderson and Constance Wynn and we look forward to working with them.
- Cassandra Ford and Fran Rothstein both resigned from the board. We are going through the process.
- The Board has taken several stances on the size of the library and pedestrian bridge. There are four upcoming Library Charrettes, Thursdays April 16, May 7, May 28 and June 7 at the Gwendolyn Coffield Center on Lyttons ville Road from 7-9 p.m. about the exterior library design. The Urban District Advisory Committee wanted more community involvement in the library process.
- I e-mailed members the County Stat Survey and the County would like our thoughts on Regional Center staff. Once members have completed the survey they can give them to me to forward to the County Stat data technician
- Mary Pat Spon is stepping down as secretary of SSCAB. There will be elections in a few months at the Executive Committee meeting. We reviewed the rules and can appoint an interim person as Secretary and Marilyn Seitz is willing to do that.

**Director's Report:**

Roylene Roberts reported:

- **Pavers-** the T&E Committee considered use of pavers in Montgomery County streetscape and accepted the staff recommendation. They will recommend to the Council that pavers be permitted in the right of way when specific installation standards are met. When the specific standards are provided, we will provide them.
- **Positive Youth Development Initiative.** The Long Branch Community Based Collaborative met on Tuesday, March 24, 2009. Attendees provided updates on their youth activities. Health and Human Services obtained grant funding for this project. Approximately \$50,000 is currently available for activities this summer. Attendees were offered an opportunity to provide suggestions concerning use of these funds. Decisions will be made this month on funded projects.
- **WSSC Water Line Relocation.** The WSSC waterline relocation is nearly complete. The pavers were replaced at our plaza today.
- **Permanent Memorial for Tia Lam** Community youth erected a memorial along Ellsworth Drive near Fenton Street for Tai Lam, the youth who was shot a few months ago. Blair High School youth intend to redo the memorial on April 5<sup>th</sup>, which would have been Tai Lam's birthday. The Peterson Companies has taken the initiative to have a memorial sometime after April 5. The Peterson Companies has obtained agreement from Tai's mother and is working with the Blair High School Principal concerning the permanent remembrance.
- **Budget Impacts** The Silver Spring Regional Center has had very little impact to the budget. However, in the County Executive's proposed budget the police sub-station in Long Branch and the elimination of the public space maintenance funding for the Long Branch commercial area. There are some community associations that are talking about this on their listservs
- **Redesign Silver Spring Regional Center Web Page-** In conjunction with the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board, Outreach Group, staff is meeting with DTS to upgrade the webpage. The purpose of the upgrade is to promote broader attendance and participation at board meetings.
- **Feasibility study Elizabeth Stickley (Old Blair) Auditorium.** Community meetings are planned to explore options to renovate the auditorium located within the Silver Spring International Middle School at the corner of Dale Driver and Wayne Avenue. The defined program requirements of the renovation are to create a multi-use facility that can accommodate moderately sized musical and theatrical performances, after-school programs and school and community events. All meetings will be held at the Silver Spring International Middle School, Instructional Media Center, 7 p.m. on the following dates April 1, April 15, April 29, May 13, and May 27 2009 (if needed).
- **Silver Spring Library Charrettes**  
Conceptual design work on the Library is moving forward. An elevated pedestrian bridge from the Wayne Avenue Paring Garage to the Library is planned to provide adequate parking, and easily accessible pedestrian and handicapped accessibility. An amendment to the Silver Spring Urban Renewal Plan is required to permit construction of a pedestrian bridge above Wayne Avenue. The draft amendment was drafted by Gary Stith and reviewed by the Department of Public Libraries, and the Office of the County Attorney. Montgomery County Public Libraries and Montgomery County

Department of General Services will hold four charrettes to receive input on the exterior design of the new Silver Spring Library. All meetings will be held from 7-9 p.m. at the Coffield Center on the following dates: April 6, May 7, May 28, June 18

- **Annual Long Branch Earth Day Clean Up Saturday, April 18, 2009, 9 a.m. to noon.**
- **Earth Day, Broad Acres Park, Saturday, April 18, 2009, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**
- **Fresh Farm Market Opens, Saturday, April 18, 2009**
- **Earth Day 5k Silver Spring Run, Sunday April 19, 2009.** Check the website at [www.silverspring5k.com](http://www.silverspring5k.com) for details.
- **Fenton Street Village Forum.** The second of a series of three forums will be held on Wednesday, April 22 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Nora School.
- **Youth Job Expo, Saturday, April 25.** For more information on the event and all activities please check the website at the [www.letsgetitstartedyouthjobfair.com](http://www.letsgetitstartedyouthjobfair.com)
- **Long Branch Unity Day, Saturday May 2, 2009** Annual Community Event sponsored by the Recreation Department.
- **Long Branch Celebrity Basketball Game, Saturday, May 2, 2009** Fifth consecutive Celebrity Basketball Game. .
- **Save Silver Spring Summit, Saturday, May 16, 2009, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.,** Montgomery College Takoma Park. Presco and others are sponsoring a Save Silver Spring Summit to develop strategies, partnerships, and goals to keep Silver Spring a community where people can live, work, travel, shop and play without fear of their persons or property. For more information, contact Tony Hausner at [thausner@gmail.com](mailto:thausner@gmail.com).
- **Silver Spring Swings Summer Concert Series** line up is complete. The concerts are Thursdays 7-9 p.m. at Silver Plaza @ the fountain, visit [www.downtownsilverspring.com](http://www.downtownsilverspring.com) for dates and performers:
  - **Shepherd's Table, "Sounding a Note" on May 16, 2009**
  - Ellsworth Fountain will open April 22, 2009 at 10 a.m.
  - Bethesda is going to have red parking meters for people to donate money for the homeless and you will be allowed to park there.
  - Pennyworth suggested that shopping at a thrift shop is actually helping to save the Earth and it supports recycling in a good way.

Jennifer Nettles announced that they are working with the local school Tai Lam attended to take down the memorial. We have a wonderful keepsake plaque to present to the family and will have a stamped brick that will replace the memorial. This should take place in a couple of weeks.

Darian Unger stated that Roylene Roberts will provide an update on the County Operating Budget. Kathy Stevens and I met with County Executive Leggett a few months ago on behalf of the Board to share our priorities that we were suggesting he consider in his proposal. The proposal is out and County Council is reviewing the budget and I will testify at one of the hearings. I don't think our priorities have changed significantly however, everyone knows it is a tough budget year.

### **Operating Budget Update**

Roylene Roberts reported that:

- The police substation in Long Branch is located at 8505 Piney Branch Road. A permanent location for a police substation was a recommendation of the Long Branch Taskforce. The County Executive budget does not include continued funding for police substation.
- The “Public Inebriation Initiative” is another recommendation of the taskforce. The support staff for this program are housed in the substation and would have to be housed in another that facility should the police substation not receive continued funding.
- The public space maintenance funds are not included in the County Executive’s Recommended budget for the Long Branch Community. Many of you know that Long Branch is the only community that receives general fund revenue for public space maintenance.
- There are cuts to ride-on that will affect our area but I don’t have the specifics.

Ben Stutz commented that five Council member are introducing Bill-17-09 which would allow funds generated by the Silver Spring Parking Lot District to be used for more than improvements to the Parking Lot District. Those Parking Lot Districts that have excess funds like Bethesda and Silver Spring traditionally stay in a closed account and would allow for some of that money to possibly be used to offset reductions, propose ride-on routes, additional services like VanGo. We had excess funds in the Bethesda and Silver Spring Parking Lot Districts and need to use the funds in other areas where they are making cut backs. The intent when it was created was to help create the public parking meters to help the Urban Districts. In some cases that has been fulfilled significantly like in Bethesda. There are Council members looking into whether we can use these funds to help offset some of the reductions other departments are making specifically transportation. I think the language as it reads now is “within a urban district” I do not think it reads “within that urban district.” We want to hear from folks on these types of changes. Councilmember Ervin is currently not a sponsor. the Public Hearing is scheduled for May 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Roylene Roberts suggested to the Board that they have discussion with Rick Siebert concerning planned use of future Parking Lot District revenues. Montgomery Hills has a Parking Lot District, the excess funds were used for streetscaping and the project is completed. I suggest hearing from Rick Siebert on Parking Lot District revenue and what their long-term plans are. They will probably resolve this before the budget passes

After Board discussion it was decided that the Darian Unger Chair, testify before County Council on behalf of the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board on the proposed FY10 budget recognizing the difficulty of this years budget and focusing on the list of requested community priorities to include Police/public safety, preserve youth programs, maintain the Urban District Budget, Fund pedestrian safety initiative wit special attention to high –incidence areas, not imposing fees on fire/rescue services, nonprofit programming of the Town Center and Eliminate reimbursements for library parking. *(For complete details of the testimony refer to the informational materials section of the packet)*

### **Community Gardens**

Ben Stutz, Policy Analyst for Councilmember Ervin reported that:

- The Parks Department identified park land throughout the County to possibly use for Community Gardens specifically in an urban area for those living in condos and apartments to have access to gardening. The Parks Department owns a huge amount of land and has the internal expertise to carry out a Community Gardens. We looked for sunlight and opened green space not being used for significant recreational spontaneous activities. Our intent is to focus on areas where we already have built in tools. The Councilmember and Department of Parks asked us to form an Exploratory Committee to identify possible sites in the Silver Spring CBD for next year. The site going forward is in Takoma Park along New Hampshire Avenue with approximately 25 plots. If anyone from this Committee would like to help please let us know.

Edith Holleman commented that she opposes Community Gardens for the following reasons:

- Lack of process and planning.
- A successful Community Gardens starts with the Community.
- Resources could have been looked into on how to start a Community Garden.

*(For complete detail, see the handout in the Information Material section of the packet.)*

Ben Stutz responded that Councilmember Ervin sent a letter to clarify the proposed community Garden pilot project. The communities indicated they wanted to see community gardens in or near their communities and in regard to the process we are learning as we go.

### **Youth/Downtown Silver Spring**

Mixed Unity youth representatives reported:

- Mixed Unity is a group that is starting to develop a Peace Council. We meet every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. We started this group after the death of Tai Lam, the stabbing at Blair High School and the shootings in the apartments. We came together in a coalition of different groups such as Identity, Gap Busters and Gandhi Brigade to form a volunteer based group to shed positive light on youth in the Silver Spring Community.
- The youth planned the “Stop the Violence benefit concert and it was great event even though the Police made some arrest This situation only made our spirit stronger and we are looking for help and support. We planned the event with no money and the musicians played for free. Gandhi Brigade is using its money to help Mixed Unity but we are becoming too big to support we would like more money to assist with providing summer jobs for kids or ordering pizza for weekly meetings.
- The perspective of people in the community is that Mixed Unity is a gang another way to support us is reaching out to the community and spreading the word that we are a group of kid seeking to work with adults in a positive way and are dedicated to stopping violence.

### **Discussion**

Constance Wynn commented the idea sounds like it has potential. It seems if there were a cohesive group, it would help the safety of the area. I think many adults resist going to area where youth congregate. I like the idea of approaching neighborhoods associations and most adults like things in writing.

Marilyn Seitz commented many civic associations have newsletters or listservs. If you send something to Darian Unger or me we can get it out. You can make flyers and hand them out making people aware that there are kids in our neighborhood who want to make a difference.

Kathy Stevens commented that she has worked over the past year with people in the community that are interested in working with youth. Megan Moriarty, Chair, Neighborhoods Committee and I discussed the possibility of having a member of Mixed Unity to be a liaison on the Neighborhoods committee. We could have a regular dialogue and receive updates on Mixed Unity. Mixed Unity might need assistance in writing grants and many of us have the experience.

Richard Jaeggi commented we were at a Seven Oaks meeting last week and originally the mission of Mixed Unity was about young people taking a stand on violence. What came out of the meeting was unhappiness. People feel like the downtown didn't belong to them. So here are people that lived through the redevelopment and they feel it is not their Downtown. I think the challenge is not just theirs, yours, Downtown Silver Spring or the County's. Our challenge is how we put this together to make a downtown that is inclusive, safe and that embraces the values we all want. It is not just for kids, adults, homeowner's or renters. That is real labor. I do not think there is an easy way to do that other than us figuring this out together. We did great on the commercial development and screwed up on the public development. Ten years later, we are still waiting for public space. Yes, the Civic Building although we have not talked about how that would be used for youth. That's the medium term focus but we need to take a short-term focus this summer there will be no turf. Thank you all for the kind letter you sent out for Mixed Unity.

### **Neighborhoods Committee**

Megan Moriarty reported that:

- The notes for the March meeting are on page 12 of the packet. We continued discussion about connecting renter's in Silver Spring. Hopefully more people are getting on the email list that exists in Silver Spring.
- The Lieutenant Liquorie gave the Committee clarification on the concert .
- Thanks to Alan Bowser, we approved two proposed letters located on page 13 and 14. The first one is for Gary Stith thanking him for his years of service in Silver Spring, next is the letter to organizers of the Stop the Violence concert and finally the SSCAB Earth Day Resolution.

**Motion:** (Linn, Olivetti) The Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board unanimously approved the Thank you letter to Gary Stith, the letter to organizers of the Stop the Violence concert and the Earth Day resolution dated April 13, 2009.

Megan Moriarty announced that the Neighborhood Committee will not have a April meeting so everyone can go to the Fenton Village Forum.

### **Outreach Working Group**

Kathy Stevens reported that:

We have been working for the past few months on outreach. Everyone should have an 8 ½ x 11 paper and if you tri-fold it it becomes a great brochure. Lucinda and Marilyn deserve all the thanks, appreciation, and hard work for the layout and design. The Outreach Group is looking at strategy one was developing the flyer, taking some of the text from the flyer and sharing that with the new website design, which Dwayne and Vicki are working on. During the month of April and May we will meet with six to eight community groups, we may not otherwise, have direct contact with civic associations that are not represented on the board or at our meetings. This group was set up to put some things in place for regular outreach. Thanks again to the Outreach Group for working on this. This has been circulated by email and I did not see any response but if there is any feedback on wording and apostrophes please forward them to me.

### **Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Committee**

Darian Unger reported that:

The meeting notes are on pages 17 and 18 of the packet and are self-explanatory. We got our standard procedure of looking at potential improvements I gave everyone a copy of the sample form that people get at meetings. We have been concerned with pedestrian safety and the Pedestrian Safety Initiative. We are in a good position because both the County Executive and the County Council seem to be enthusiastic about funding the Pedestrian Safety Initiative. Finally, we heard some details from the pedestrian safety coordinator about a couple of projects being worked on in Silver Spring.

### **CED Committee**

Phil Olivetti reported that:

The notes from the meeting are on page 20 of your packet. We had a good meeting and thanks to Paul and Jen for giving us information on the Mixed Unity issues. Primarily we talked about the Fenton Village Forum and the fact that there will be 16 people from the board at the forum on April 22.

Deborah Linn commented at we gave three months notice about the last Forum and four Board members attended and that is inexcusable. We passed out flyers talking about the board and what it does than at least show up. I realize everybody is involved more than I in community things but when this Board is the sponsor of an activity and received a three months notice and four people from the board show up is embarrassing. I would appreciate it if more than four Board members show up this time. I would like to ask for four volunteers to help with the break out sessions and take notes. We will need volunteers to distribute flyers. We set up an email for people to send comments before the meeting, which we will collect and do a presentation of what they want in the community. This is not designed to be a meeting about the Hillerson Project.

The CED Committee will not meet in April because of the Fenton Village Forum.

Darian Unger commented that there are many people in the community who wanted to be involved in the Fenton Village Forum yet only four board members attended out of seventy-two people total. Megan and Marilyn have been working on this a lot and I wanted to say thank you.

### **Fenton Village**

Mike Gerecht, CD Publications, 8240 Fenton located on the southeast corner of the project reported that:

- He opposes the project and commented that he was a member of the Silver Spring Redevelopment Board that organized the businesses to get zoning upgraded for the Park and Planning recommendation. This is not an anti-development move we pushed for higher zoning to have development in the area and Hillerson did not participate. As mentioned, we have a problem unlike any other parking lot in the County because this was houses. In their deed, they donated the land for the parking lot and the caveat was the County agreed to pave alleyways to provide access to all the surrounding building owners. What occurred is the County engaged in research but did not do their homework. Nobody realized that there was this pattern of alleyways, easements and right-of-ways until after the process was underway. We wrote the easement for the County to provide us access from a pedestrian bridge to the parking lot and Hillerson wants to put a building right on my porch. I have an easement and it is in the deed but County is not supporting this. We have hired attorneys to work on this issue trying to come up with some proposals. There are a number of other issues East Silver Spring is in opposition to this, public safety issues, the underground parking replacing surface parking and beside all these things you are not gaining anything except the County is helping the Developer avoid putting in the workforce housing they are suppose to. This is the public safety of customers, tenants and Fenton Street Village citizens and there is nothing like this in the entire County and the Developer turned down the Police when they asked about a review of the plan for safety. I have no problem with Hillerson developing his properties but we are being asked to literally jeopardize our lives in that underground garage. In addition, the parking garage cuts off all access to Fenton Street Village.

### **New Business**

- Alan Bowser announced the First Annual Silver Spring Blues Festival in Downtown Silver Spring, Saturday, May 9 from 2-6 p.m. For more information visit [www.silverspringdowntown.com](http://www.silverspringdowntown.com)
- Megan Moriarty announced the County Executive started a work group they are having a series of public meetings and the next meeting is May 5, at Long Branch. We want renters to come share their experiences and opinions this is a chance for you to give your input to this work group that is making recommendations not only to the County Executive but will probably make proposed legislative agenda suggestions for the next assembly.



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